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JAPAN
RISE OF NEONATIONALISM

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[Article by Yoshihisa Komori, SANKEI SHIMBUN Washington Bureau Chief: "Criticizing Japan's Neonationalism"]

[Text] *How can Japan avoid international isolation? The following is a proposition from an international journalist who sharply attacks the pitfalls contained in Ishihara's overemphasis of national glory, Omae's overemphasis of economics, and Karatsu's overemphasis of technology.*

The New Frankenstein

"The winner of the 1980's: Japan! Japan is now the world's new Frankenstein, a new monster, a huge octopus spreading its tentacles throughout the entire world!"

This assertion was shouted out by John McLaughlin, a veteran commentator, on a news discussion program on NBC-TV in the United States.

The McLaughlin Group is a popular program in which the host, John McLaughlin, and four or five big-name journalists who are active on the frontline of their profession freely discuss the topics of the day. It is a tough news show in which passionate conservatives and liberals argue loudly over issues ranging from liberalization in Eastern Europe to the U. S. drug problem and invasion of Panama.

The subject of the final program of the year on 31 December 1989 was a look back at the 1980's and a forecast for the 1990's. At the end of the hour-long discussion, everything was tied together by declaring the winners and losers of the 1980's. McLaughlin proposed Japan as a winner and, in a grave tone, rendered the verdict that it was "the new Frankenstein."

Japan, by exporting a flurry of new products to various places in the world, has grabbed the market share and then cornered the market steadily by buying up the businesses and real estate of those places. That Japan is now the new economic monster, the huge octopus.

McLaughlin went on to add to this his "nightmare of the 1990's." "There will come a day when Tokyo and Moscow form an axis. Now that will truly be a nightmare." This sort of language, which, indeed, sounds like an exaggeration or a joke, is actually an accurate reflection of America's current harsh view of Japan.

Americans are on their guard, watching Japan warily as a grave threat and viewing the Japanese as a group of aliens from a distant planet. This attitude is widening steadily among the American people. This sort of perception at a popular level has begun to be depicted clearly even in motion pictures.

In "Kinjite," a recent movie starring the popular action actor Charles Bronson, a group of Japanese businessmen residing in Los Angeles play a key role. The lifestyle in Japan up to the time the businessmen are sent to the United States is depicted as extremely ugly.

Commuter hell, mashers on streetcars, white collar workers reading comic books and pornography, wild sprees in bars and clubs under the pretext of service, the oppressed wives of the businessmen...the view of a warped present-day Japan is spread out further and demonstrated over and over again [in this film]. For the average American, an unfortunate picture is painted of a part of Japanese life that is looked upon as strange and sick.

The film depicts the daily life of the Japanese staying in Los Angeles from a critical angle. Released from the oppression of Japan, the businessmen are caricatured as behaving arrogantly as if they were lords of a manor. Upon seeing men and women arriving in luxury cars for an extravagant party of just Japanese at a hotel in central Los Angeles, Detective Bronson, who is the hero, finally exclaims, "You all behave as if you have bought up every bit of this land!"

The basic storyline is that Detective Bronson destroys a criminal gang that has kidnapped the daughter of a Japanese businessman, but the point that runs deep is that even this simple action film takes the "Japanese threat" as a theme and depicts Japanese as an unlikable group of predators.

The spread of such criticism of Japan, the soft side of which can be seen in movies and television, has as its basis the hard core criticism of Japan in the U.S. Government, Congress, and economic community.

Unfair Double Standard

I began a genuine examination of U.S. behavior towards Japan with the Lockheed Scandal in 1976. At the time I had just come to Washington for the first time as a newspaper correspondent, and criticism of Japan was much more dispassionate than today. Nevertheless, it was already being discussed.

Since then, the criticism has become steadily more severe with each passing year. Every year the Japan-U.S. relationship has been assessed as being "at its worst," and while the Japanese side would adopt all sorts of policies, the U.S. side's attitude towards Japan steadily rolled downhill.

In 1989, the situation reached the point where the U.S. Government and Congress together, in the trade arena, adopted the hardline measure of Super 301. The U.S. Government also initiated structural consultations to attack the very mores of Japanese society itself. In the area of defense, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution to levy the full burden of the cost of stationing U.S. troops in Japan on the Japanese.

The 1990's have started out for Japan with how to deal with the United States becoming the greatest and most

urgent problem on the agenda. In particular, with the security situation changing worldwide because of the sharp turnabout in East-West relations, what new status and significance to give to the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, which was the heart of the bond between Japan and the United States up to now, is becoming a subject of ardent debate inside Japan.

Looking back, I find that only a small portion of the U.S. criticism of Japan in the latter half of the 1970's produced an emotional response like that of today. The target of the criticism was narrowed down to Japan's attitude to the world outside, such as its behavior towards the rest of the world in the areas of trade and defense.

The following, simply stated, were the criticisms of that time: "Even though its own market is a closed system, Japan launches ferocious export offensives against foreign countries, secures market shares by even committing dumping, and destroys the industries of the other country."

"Japan concentrates solely on economic activity and, internationally, only pursues making money as a 'commercialist.' It does not attempt to assume international responsibilities in politics and other areas."

"Although Japan officially takes the position of being a member of the Western camp, its many words and deeds are far apart. In particular, it does not carry out correctly the joint Japan-U.S. sharing of defense nor does it participate in the joint Western effort to protect the free trade bloc. Rather, it steals a "free ride." "Japan is always passive on international issues and never takes the initiative. The pattern of much of its words and deeds are that of an unfair double standard by which it says and does what is convenient for the time and place."

Apart from the question of whether the contents of such criticism were accurate, the aim of the attack was always against Japan's policies. The pattern was to criticize specific Japanese words and deeds as unfair in light of international norms or U.S. standards and was based, more or less, on logic. It took the form of criticizing individual Japanese policies or actions rather than castigating Japan's system and disposition themselves.

However, criticism of Japan is now more wide-ranging and severe as symbolized by the Japanese assessment of it as "Japan-bashing." It became emotional and discriminatory as seen in the pounding of Toshiba products with a hammer. Demands with no basis in logic have also multiplied as [U.S. critics] had forgotten their own faults.

However, when this "emotional" aspect is washed away and we scrutinize the heart of the criticism against Japan, we find that its contents surprisingly have hardly changed over these past 10 or more years. The drift of the "logical" part of the argument, to criticize Japan's attitude towards the world and its external policies, is entirely the same as before.

On the other hand, Japan's current response is to only see and hear the hysterical, sharp portion of the U.S. criticism of Japan, and a noteworthy tendency is for Japan to counterattack with a similar force. Do not special customs of the Japanese market, which are apparent in construction company consultations and computer manufacturers' one yen bids, correspond to "a closed system"? With regard to exports to foreign markets, Japan raises the free market principle that "it is natural for cheaper and better items to sell well," launches an offensive, and, when it comes to importing to Japan, takes a posture equivalent to an unfair double standard such as when it will not permit even one grain of rice to enter Japan under the pretext of "protection of domestic agriculture."

With regard to this point, the line of argument increasing in force in Japan today is to devote all efforts to finding fault with the United States and declare that "Japan is not evil" without agreeing to discussions and dedicating any time to introspection at all.

A representative example of this can be perceived in the trend of the recent assertions by Shintaro Ishihara, Kenichi Omae, and Hajime Karatsu. The difference of expression and degree in the argument which states that "the fault lies with the United States," is certain to appeal to the majority of Japanese because it says that Japan is right. Because the United States is mercilessly heaping criticism on Japan, some of it is truly strange and vague. This will have the effect itself of a tough backlash.

However, if such a line of reasoning has not accurately grasped the overall picture of Japan-U.S. relations and the international environment in which Japan is situated, then the risk is great for the long-term national welfare of Japan because the impact of the proponents is great. Things will become more grave if important points are overlooked, points that should be seen in this line of reasoning.

The Aroma of Neonationalism

Since 1972, I have spent more than 13 years all told overseas in Vietnam, the United States, Great Britain, and in the United States again. During that time, I have always examined foreigners views and feelings toward Japan. I have come to understand how foreigners viewed Japan's diplomatic posture or its economic practices. In particular, I have thoroughly observed Japan-U.S. trade friction as described above from the epicenter. When, with that personal experience for background, I read the current theories on the Japan-U.S. relationship of Ishihara, Omae, and Karatsu, I sensed the distortions and flaws in their arguments. Their line of reasoning, which was heavy with the aroma of neonationalism fixed in my mind the danger of it being the road to Japan's international isolation.

The first overall distortion in the arguments of the three gentlemen is the point being advanced that the United States is the only country in the world that is severely

criticizing Japan. They have developed an argument which views the so-called "Japan problem" as only existing with the United States. The sketch being drawn, as in Ishihara's phrase that "the watchdog became a mad dog," is that of all the countries in the world, only the United States, because of its own troubles, is madly and wildly accusing Japan of being unfair.

However, the criticisms that the United States throws at Japan, such as "the closed market system," "the unfair double standard," "predatory export offensives," "international uncooperativeness," and "mercantilism only in the pursuit of profits" are actually widespread among the nations of Europe and Southeast Asia as well.

For example, every country in the EC (European Community) has extremely deeprooted criticisms of Japan. Caution and distrust are widespread.

In France, Minister for European Affairs Edith Cresson said at an official function, "Japan does not follow any rules and is attempting to dominate the world." This female minister declared, "Because Japan's word is not enough, we must establish severe restrictions on the importing of automobiles and electronic equipment into the EC."

Alan Gomez, the president of the Thomson Group, which is an electronics and household electric appliance manufacturer in France, censured Japan with the following strong language on a television show last December, "Japan's business methods are like cheating. Japan closes its market to foreign products that are highly competitive. It keeps the price of its products high at home but rushes to sell them cheaply overseas. Because it turns its profits in Japan back into capital investment, this is completely unfair for foreign firms which cannot adopt such actions."

Chairman Gomez has repeated this statement many times over. It is already well known that Prime Minister Thatcher, who visited Japan last September, has criticized the closed condition of Japan's market, saying, "No matter how often it is said that this is a result of Japan's culture, that does not change the fact that a barrier is a barrier." The British Government, along with demanding over the years that Japan change its liquor tax since it is an unfair system that puts imported scotch at a disadvantage, has criticized the Tokyo Stock Exchange as being closed to British firms and has demanded membership.

In "New Problems for Trade Between Europe and Japan," a policy proposal report published under the joint authorship of Anthony Tisdale, an economist working for the EC Commission in Belgium, and James Morehouse, a member of the European Parliament who is also a member of Great Britain's Conservative Party, the following is said: "The EC's trade deficit with Japan continues to increase. If this is left alone, the market economy and free trade of the entire world and not just Western Europe will be damaged so badly that it will be unable to recover, because of Japan's export offensives which have reached the point of being brutal and the closed market which has reached the point of obstinacy."

"The offensive Japanese economy, which eats up the demand of other countries, is structurally incompatible by its nature with the international principles of open markets and free trade. An overall offensive is needed uniting Western Europe, the United States, and the Asian nations against Japan's unfair trade practices."

"Japan has never carried out the international obligations and responsibilities of becoming an economic power."

Its contents are precisely the same as the criticisms that the United States has heaped on Japan since the 1970's.

I was stationed in London for close to two years beginning in the summer of 1987 and visited a wide range of places in Europe. I frequently heard this kind of criticism of Japan. When I attended seminars and symposiums on the EC union, which was rising at the time, criticism always emerged from the French, British, and Italian representatives about Japan's economic system and business methods, describing them as "dirty" and "predatory."

Even in contacts on an individual level, sarcasm cynicism, and cross-examinations were heaped on me many times about Japan. Once when I happened to be sitting next to a British scholar, who was an ex-soldier, in a television bureau waiting room in London, he noticed that I was Japanese and all of a sudden heaped ridicule on me, saying, "Do you run around busy all day selling semiconductor chips or something?"

In Great Britain, around the time of the death of the emperor, I witnessed popular newspapers, former soldiers, and their families violently exclaim in abusive language that "the Japanese were a cruel race." I myself was once rebuked directly by the wife of a former British soldier who was a prisoner of war of the Japanese Army. She shouted loudly without thinking, "The Japanese both in the past and today are a race who do not regard human life as important."

Recently, the reaction in Europe to Japanese behavior has become quite lively. Unlike the United States, they do not strike at Japan too much from the front because the nations of Western Europe have not suffered real damage to their economies like the United States has.

The EC countries have established barriers to Japanese products and have been protecting domestic industries. They protect their own markets by closed trade protectionist measures that would appear to violate the GATT, as well as old-style import volume restrictions on designated Japanese products, antidumping tariffs, and reciprocity. For example, in the automobile area, Italy will not allow more than a mere 3,300 cars from Japan to be imported each year. Consequently, they have been

opening negotiations with Japan in the same way the United States has, and do not feel the need to make special requests of Japan.

Criticism of Japan Is Brimming Over in Europe Also

Shintaro Ishihara would probably reject out of hand the criticism of Japan that exists over a wide range in Europe as yet another slander and would state that "it is Europe that is at fault." He would probably argue that all of Europe's criticisms of Japan are wrong and that not one correct point exists among them.

To be sure, Europe's knowledge and understanding of Japan are quite low when compared to the United States, so the arguments by which it castigates Japan are crude and contain quite a few misconceptions. However, we probably cannot say that all of it is wrong.

Moreover, even if we were to concede the point and say that all their assertions are wrong, how good can we feel about the fact that both Europe and the United States are so replete with similar criticisms of Japan?

Moreover, the criticism is not just over economic behavior or trade patterns. Rather, as in the British example, the Japanese are not liked in Europe as a people. That reality is not pleasant for the Japanese no matter how deserved. If the best thing is to ignore it, then we should by all means ignore it.

However, if the ultranationalist argument in Japan that "Japan is always right" becomes too strong in its appeal, then I, as a Japanese who has lived overseas a long time, feel that the real situation of how Japan is viewed overseas and how few friends Japan has should be reported at all costs.

Even if Japan were truly "always right," if it drew sharp glances and biting words from many foreign countries, a hardline counterattack would simply further pave the way for our isolation. If we do not personally reflect on the causes of this criticism, if we do not take into consideration the views of others, if we merely counter with the argument that "it is you who are at fault," then we will confront increasingly stronger international criticism.

If the internationalists, who understand the real state of affairs in foreign countries and the position in which Japan finds itself internationally, are overwhelmed in Japan by the heroics of the current neo-nationalist argument, then they will become subdued and quiet. The Foreign Ministry, which immediately counters, to the point of being oversensitive, the criticisms that regularly come from abroad, is ridiculed by Shintaro Ishihara as follows: "a bunch of minor officials who are carriage bearers for the United States" and "(Japan's) diplomats are people who present their queer feelings of inferiority and plant the seeds of misunderstanding in the world about the Japanese." Even though Ishihara has made those remarks, the Foreign Ministry has remained as silent as a clam.

The reputation of Japan in today's international society is bad to the point of being odious. Many countries have taken a disliking to Japan. While this will not increase severely, it is not desirable. The Japanese are viewed coldly as a "group of unlikable human beings who only thing about money."

Having lived overseas a long time, the more countries that I visit the more acutely aware I am made of this view of Japan. I was even hit with this sort of thinking in the African jungle.

This occurred when I visited Angola, where a civil war has been going on, in December of 1988. Ten armed soldiers from UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] which has been fighting a guerrilla war for many years against the Marxist-Leninist government, led me from their headquarters deep in the jungle on a forced march for about a week to the frontline.

When I began to talk intimately with several of the soldiers who could speak English, one of them asked, "It is said that the Japanese are buying expensive land and buildings in the United States regardless of the cost. Are they really a people who only think of money?"

Since I did not think in my wildest dreams that this sort of thing could be said in the battlefields of Angola, I was at a loss for words for an instant. However, when I inquired as to where he heard this, he replied that he had heard this many times on programs like news commentaries carried on radio broadcasts from Portugal, which was Angola's former colonial ruler.

I even had an experience like this in the Soviet Union.

This occurred in May of 1988 when I visited Moscow to report on the U.S.-Soviet summit. Gerasimov, the Soviet Foreign Ministry's spokesman, gave a daily briefing to the journalists attending from various countries. He is a person with a reputation for a ready wit, such as when he referred to Frank Sinatra's "My Way" in response to a question from a U.S. journalist.

At a press conference, he was asked how many journalists had gathered from which countries to report on the Bush-Gorbachev talks. Gerasimov first began his report with "I think that the most, of course, are American, then come the British, and then the French...."

Then, in the midst of his response, he curled his lips and sarcastically added, as if he had just remembered, "Oh, and of course, there are always so many Japanese here that I cannot count them." At the time, I was seated in the front row and had a clear understanding of his expression and tone. His scorn of the Japanese was plain. Perhaps he was only making fun of the human wave tactics of the Japanese mass media, but what I saw when he said the word "Japanese" has always remained in my memory as a clear expression of contempt.

If we deal with the trade friction between Japan and the United States with the precondition that "the United

States is the only country in the world that is critical of Japan" and do not recognize the critical attitude and emotions towards Japan in international society at large, then we run the risk of an ostrich who puts its head in the sand.

There should be no need to dare state that we might be following the fate of the Japan of the 1930's, which did not keep a wide and cool eye on the world and which, if criticized, repeatedly heroically countered that it was the other side that was at fault.

The Errors in Ishihara's International Awareness

Well, let us first talk about Shintaro Ishihara's series of assertions.

Initially I did not fully understand whether the assertions, which begin with Ishihara's *The Japan That Can say "No,"* were really the policy proposals of an influential politician belonging to the party in power in Japan, or were simply the literary self-expression of a writer who freely uses metaphor and rhetoric. However, when I learned that he was repeating these same assertions over and over in various forums, I finally took this for a serious discourse on policy.

An English translation of his opinions, which was published in the January 15 edition of THE NEW YORK TIMES this year, clearly sets out his specific policy objectives from self-development of the FSX (the next generation jet support fighter) to actual abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and the self-defense of Japan.

The Japan That Can Say "No," which is a collection of Ishihara's assertions in their purest form, has touched off a terrible reaction from Americans, be that as it may. Ishihara himself has written that "too much of a fuss is being made in Japan." However, the U.S. counterattack and indignation directed towards this book, which the Japanese mass media are reporting, are actually no more than the tip of the iceberg.

I have followed the tumult in Washington from the time an English translation of this book was distributed in the U.S. Congress last summer, and the clippings of U.S. newspaper and magazine articles that take up the contents of this book are so many that the large folder containing them is overflowing. Moreover, the majority of them are severe rebuttals to Ishihara's assertions, and quite a few are emotionally charged reactions.

The persons criticizing Ishihara are no longer just the politicians who have criticized Japan over the trade issue as in the past. Rather, the criticism is becoming more widespread.

If I can give an illustration, a letter which says that "Jingo Ishihara makes statements on superconductivity which is America-bashing without facts" was published in THE NEW YORK TIMES on 12 December of last year from John Langone. Langone is a scholar who lived in Japan as a Fulbright scholar and is the author of the book, "Superconductivity."

Langone notes that Ishihara has written, "The technology for Japan's maglev [magnetically levitated] superconducting linear motor car only exists in Japan and West Germany and does not exist anywhere in the Soviet Union or the United States." He then refutes this by stating that this technology was first discovered in the United States some 20 years ago, and that [U.S. researchers] succeeded in operating a model they manufactured for which they obtained a patent.

Langone bares his anger when he writes, "Ishihara's other comment is that Japan needs Asia more than America. Tell that to the 15,000 Japanese students and researchers who show up on U.S. campuses every year."

When reading through all of Ishihara's arguments, I think that at the bottom lies a powerful appeal, seen in such statements as, "Japan is a self-sufficient, independent power" and "the Japanese possess prestige and pride." I do not generally consider the outpouring of feelings of nationalism and patriotism to be unnatural or unhealthy in and of themselves.

Even someone like myself who has lived a life abroad has had many opportunities to be made especially aware of my identity as a Japanese. There have been quite a few times when I was seriously compelled to consider Japan's pride and prestige or the lack of these. The fact that Japan is the center of attention, respected, or loved produces a feeling of delight in me that has no rhyme or reason.

However, Ishihara's arguments, on top of that, have a strong element of overemphasizing national glory, and I think there is a grave risk in the direction and means by which he seeks Japan's independence.

In the first place, Ishihara uses a variety of expressions to state his view of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, such as Japan should draw the line with the United States and sever the alliance relationship. Within these statements are clearly expressions that can be interpreted as seeking abrogation of the treaty. However, if that demonstrates independence, then that explains his argument for linking up with the Asian nations or being able to cooperate with the European nations.

I think that this international awareness is completely wrong. The position of Japan as "a member of the West" up to now is strictly based on the alliance with the United States. The United States is tied together with Western Europe by the alliance known as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). A Japan that cuts the bond of security with the United States would have to automatically separate from the Western camp, even with the world of detente. Relations with Western Europe would also become decidedly estranged. No matter how strong a hold Japan has on various countries

economically, the destruction of the security and political ties themselves would be indefensible.

Among the noncommunist countries of Asia as well, there are countries which only take up a posture of friendship and cooperation because Japan is allied with the United States. What free Asian nation would support a Japan that turned its back on the United States? Even without that, the fact that Japan is unpopular in Asia is apparent from the outpouring of criticism that has already occurred towards Ishihara's linkage of "South Korea's economic prosperity" and "Japan's prewar rule," criticism that has come from the South Korean mass media who attack this as "the beautification of colonial domination."

As already described from my own personal experiences, there are many countries who, like the United States, do not express their dislike of Japan directly, but who are even more severely critical of the Japanese way of doing things than the United States. The bonds of such countries in Western Europe and Southeast Asia are more deep-rooted than we in Japan like to think.

The history by which Japan, after World War II, became a full member of international society through its alliance with the United States is still not that old. Much of Japan's participation in international organizations like the United Nations and GATT came about through the United States. Such circumstances may severely hurt present-day Japan's neonationalism. However, we cannot do away with the fact that the international society which accepted Japan after the war still has structurally saved the traces of that history. I do not think that such a situation is unreasonable or humiliating.

An Inquiry into the Ideal of an Independent Japan?

In the second place, Ishihara asserts that Japan should possess the global ideal of an independent Japan distinct from the United States. Because he also expresses this "global ideal" as a "political ideal," its meaning seems to be a political ideal that is valid internationally.

He prescribes that this political ideal of an independent Japan is unlike American democracy and Soviet or Communist Chinese communism and possesses a historical importance and international universality that rivals both of those.

However, I, first of all, believe that present-day Japan does not have either the capacity or the will to create this sort of grand political ideal or to disseminate it internationally.

It is absurd to disseminate our country's ideology or values to other countries. Hasn't a special feature of Japanese postwar thinking been that the correct way is not to make such an attempt? Even though I only read quickly through an article by R. Matthews in the January 1990 edition of CHUO KORON entitled "Where Japan, the 'Internationalized' Developing Country, Is Heading," I was made to appreciate the degree to which that reality is undesirable.

That article reports that the view of many of Japan's opinion leaders is that the best road for Japan, outside of economic activities with other countries, is to do nothing, say nothing and adopt no policies towards those countries. Within the article, the words of Toshitsugu Taoka, a reporter for the magazine, AERA, eloquently states the case. He said, "To have a philosophy of how to rebuild the world is a kind of arrogance. We are suppressing communism, and we ought not to attempt to disseminate democracy," and "Even if the leaders of a certain nation begin to slaughter their people, this should not be of any concern to Japan."

Moreover, even if there was the will to work out a global ideal in Japan, I cannot believe that the present-day leadership class has the capacity to do it. This is because I do not think that they have the political and ideological maturity needed to create, realize, and spread abroad an ideal with international universality.

What, to begin with, is this global ideal that Ishihara is propounding?

Although he states over and over again that "it makes use of both high technology and financial strength," this in no way clarifies the essential contents of his political ideal.

That a high level of technology and financial strength do not of themselves satisfy a global ideal is self-evident.

Money is strictly the means by which groups of human beings survive. That in itself cannot be an objective or ideal of self-fulfillment. As for technology, that is a tool, after all, by which human beings can live at a higher level.

The question really is what purposes are the money and the technology being used for?

I am skeptical about Ishihara's premise of high technology and financial strength being the base for the international political ideal of an independent Japan. This is because even though Japan has made an ostentatious display of its high technology and money up to now, the backlash against Japan is increasing internationally, and a movement to learn from Japan any ideals outside of inorganic economics is nowhere to be seen.

Even the point that Ishihara advocates of this global ideal being an ideal of an independent Japan different from American democracy runs the risk of international isolation, I feel. Free democracy of the American democracy type does not just belong to the United States but is an ideology common to a number of nations of the Western camp, including Japan, and is already fixed as a common political system.

It goes without saying that the actual politics of the United States has many flaws and problems. However,

American democracy, which is based on the doctrine of popular sovereignty in which the form of government is determined strictly by the will of those to be governed; pluralism by means of a public selection process of a multiple party system; freedom of the individual; and the respect of human rights, is of the same species as the free democratic systems of Western Europe. In that sense, the noncommunist world can be considered a complete global ideal.

The current liberalization actions in the communist bloc appear to be taking on the appearance of American-type free democracy as when the students demonstrating in China's Tiananmen Square displayed a large imitation of the Statue of Liberty. At least, Eastern Europe certainly can be said to be heading in that direction.

If we were to search for the ideal of an independent Japan different from the American democracy-type of political ideology, whose international universality is becoming ever wider, the direction of that ideal would by all means be towards international isolation. In the worst case, it would lead to an attempt to separate from the free democratic ideology common in the West.

Abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Alliance?

Ishihara does not recognize the deterrent factor and other uses of the Japan-U.S. alliance, and so he calls for its abrogation day and night.

There is a contradiction which will remain unresolved until further notice when an influential member of the party in power, which takes maintaining the Japan-U.S. alliance as a basic policy of the nation, says that the alliance had no usefulness even in the past.

However, the anger that Ishihara shows towards the United States in the defense area is even more odd. He objects to the United States keeping Japan "in a subordinate position," saying that "this means Japan should depend on and inform" the United States of everything. However, Japan has, since the 1960's, had both the freedom and right to abrogate the Japan-U.S. alliance, in other words, the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Ishihara himself, in another place, has written, "Japan has a free hand to choose either the United States or the Soviet Union."

It is the Japanese people who have elected and sent to the seat of political power the party that has supported adherence to the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. If this party abrogates the security treaty, the Japanese people have the freedom at any time to confer political power on the Communist Party or the Socialist Party. Is the United States really influencing the general elections in Japan?

If Japan, which has placed the most severe restrictions in the world on its defense under Article 9 of the Constitution, were to form a military alliance with another country, it would be self-evident that its position would be that of a subordinate. If the other country were a military power, Japan would be more subordinate than ever.

The United States is impatient towards Japan with its "argument for Japan as a special case," but when it comes to the Security Treaty, Japan itself has declared to the world that "this is special." If Japan signed the Security Treaty with the United States under those special conditions, then Ishihara's "subordinate relationship," which, simply speaking, is a relationship in which Japan uses its military force for nothing more than self-defense and entrusts everything else to the United States, is only natural. A majority of the nation approves of this or had approved it. Consequently, they have supported the security policy up to now.

In other words, the "subordinate relationship" that he speaks of in the security area is nothing more than the choice of the Japanese people. Consequently, he should direct his anger and complaints at the Japanese people rather than at the United States.

I also think that the attitude that the United States Government and Congress took on the FSX issue was unfair. However, the development of a jet fighter by an independent Japan in a manner that is linked to self-defense as advocated by Ishihara as an alternative is something that I believe the majority of Japanese people would never approve. He also resents the U.S. military bases stationed in Japan, saying, "These are not for Japan, but rather a part of the worldwide strategy of the United States itself." However, it is natural to think that the United States considers the Japan-U.S. alliance to be within the framework of its own worldwide strategy. The point that the United States gives preference first to its own security and its own interests is self-evident as it would be with any other country in the area of defense. It could not be expected to give preference to the defense of Japan, which is another country, before its own safety and its worldwide strategy.

The fact that Japan has incorporated itself into the U.S. worldwide strategy comes from a decision that it serves the security of the country and the interests of the country. Consequently, Japan has preserved the Security Treaty up to now.

Ishihara's argument, which suggests that the nuclear force of the United States and the military presence of the United States in Japan serve no use as a deterrent, sounds something like the arguments of those in the disarmament movement.

When a country possessing nuclear weapons pledges to retaliate against an enemy that attacks its allied partner and, for that purpose, actually deploys nuclear weapons, even if there is evidence that it would not ultimately use nuclear weapons, the doubt always remains in the mind of the enemy that "by some chance it might." Doesn't he know that this doubt is the nuclear deterrent, no matter how small it might be?

Similarly, U.S. military bases in Japan tell any party that would make Japan its enemy and consider attacking Japan and posing as a military threat to it that the United States will automatically be joined with Japan as an enemy. Hence, these bases have the deterrent effect of a trip-wire and, at the minimum, cannot be ignored unless one completely rejects the usefulness of military force.

Although the military situation between East and West is now changing greatly, such a reality had continued up to the present.

Ishihara's argument has a bias in that it appears to ignore the economic usefulness of the Japan-U.S. alliance for Japan. The United States provided distinct discrimination by giving preference to other countries that were allies in such areas as foreign investment, and manufactured imports to, its own country and the transfer of technology to other countries. This is a preference over those who are simply friendly countries, those who are neutral nonaligned countries, and those communist countries who are potential enemies. The allied countries, of course, receive the most preferential treatment systematically.

The Hollowness of the Explanation of Japan-U.S. Friction and Racial Prejudice

In the fourth place, Ishihara gives great weight to racial prejudice as the cause of Japan-U.S. friction.

He states first in *The Japan That Can Say "No"* that "at the root of Japan-U.S. friction is the racial prejudice of the United States." If, in addition to a chapter which has as a theme that the United States dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan and not on West Germany is a sign of racial prejudice, and that Russians are trusted more than Japanese by Americans because the Japanese are a colored people, he arrives at the conclusion that "this is the reason for the U.S. impatience with the colored race of Japan." Hence, his initial account assumes significance in that he says that the United States criticism of Japan is a sign of racial prejudice.

In a later article, he shifts his emphasis to an assertion that there is racial prejudice in American society.

However, whether U. S. criticisms of Japan are a sign of racial prejudice, and whether there is racial prejudice in the United States are separate arguments.

Francis Fukuyama, an American of Japanese descent, has become a hero of the entire U.S. intelligentsia with his major article, "The End of History?" Five congressmen of Japanese descent are active in both houses of the highest legislative body in the United States.

Not only that, the inroads that the approximately 700,000 Americans of Japanese descent have made in various aspects of American life is striking. These Americans of Japanese descent would say that "racial prejudice exists for those who seek it out."

However, that, of course, does not means that there is no racial prejudice in American society. Since, in the first place, there is not a country in the world today that is absolutely devoid of prejudice, arguing whether there is racial prejudice in one country is a waste.

However, when it is concluded that the criticism of Japan in the United States and the demands it makes of Japan are based on racial prejudice, then the subject of the discussion becomes considerably more narrow. Consequently, it is only natural to demand specific evidence from those reaching such a conclusion. In fact, former Assistant Secretary of Commerce Clyde Prestowitz, who is an influential proponent of "Japan-bashing," nicely states, "My wife and adopted son are Asian, so you could say that I am biased towards a colored race. I would like to see proof that that bias is the reason I am critical of Japan's economic policies."

How does Ishihara's argument explain the fact that Americans of Japanese descent with the same Japanese blood as us also severely criticize Japan's policies and attitudes without looking forward to intensifications of Japan-U.S. friction?

Senator Daniel Inoue, who is of Japanese descent and who is now an elder statesman in the Democratic Party, made some famous speeches in the latter half of the 1970's violently criticizing Japan for not accepting Vietnamese refugees. Unlike the recent pretenders who have fled for economic reasons, refugees afraid of political oppression escaped from South Vietnam by boat at that time. In contrast even with countries who were not involved directly in the Vietnam war and yet accepted several thousand or several ten thousand persons, Japan just permitted a mere three persons to reside in Japan.

Senator Inoue always raised that point with persons from Japan visiting his office in Washington, complaining, "I think that, as a human being who has Japanese ancestors just like you do, I am truly ashamed of Japan's exclusionary attitude."

Congressman Robert Matsui, who is a third-generation American of Japanese descent, has consistently criticized Japan's economic and trade policies for over the past 10 years. Time and again he has drafted resolutions criticizing Japan in the House over the semiconductor issue. When he visited Japan, the country of his grandparents, in the mid-1980's, he said, "I am surprised by the arrogant attitude of Japan's trade policy leaders." After that, he took an even more severe attitude of castigating Japan.

Norman Mineta, who has served in the House of Representatives for 8 terms and 16 years, has criticized for a long time both Japan's trade and defense policies.

These American politicians of Japanese descent are racially pure Japanese. The fact that they have relatives in Japan and do not possess violent emotions against the Japanese people themselves is apparent from their daily

behavior. Nevertheless, they express their criticisms of Japan's foreign posture and policies towards the United States without reserve.

The criticism of Japan by these Americans of Japanese descent can be considered as poking a hole in Shintaro Ishihara's "explanation of racial prejudice as the cause for Japan-U.S. friction."

A "Borderless Economic" Base

Next, I would like to discuss the assertions of Kenichi Omae about Japanese-U.S. relations.

"Borderless economy" is a key phrase that Omae frequently uses when he discusses not only Japan-U.S. relations, but Japan's foreign relations overall. This has become his major coordinate axis when he discusses Japan-U.S. friction.

His "borderless economy" theory states that because, among the advanced nations of Japan, the United States, and Europe, "goods and money (goods and capital) have begun to move quite freely across borders," the economies of these nations have become integrated or are becoming linked in a way close to a "borderless economy."

From this premise, he draws the conclusions that "treating Japan-U.S. trade friction as a problem between nations is difficult now since the borders have disappeared" and "the Japan-U.S. trade imbalance is a fabrication." He makes proposals like "it would be best to buy the Northern Territories from the Soviet Union by paying cash for them," "the country of Japan should become a republic by splitting it up somewhat," and "let us buy large plots of land around the United States as part of our land shortage policy and have extraterritoriality recognized," but it is odd to speak of extraterritoriality when borders are expected to disappear.

However, I think that, first of all, there are major flaws in Omae's "borderless economy" theory itself.

In the first place, when he explains the international environment in which Japan is situated, he always develops the argument that this "borderless economy" is everything and never touches upon politics, security, and ideology, which are the framework of the basis for international relations, even more so than economics. He advances his explanation of the concept of a "borderless economy" as if politics and ideology exist without any connection to it. However, the idea of a "borderless economy" itself is actually one vivid ideological choice. It is also a product of political choices. In the East-West conflict of the postwar world, the East consistently propounded Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which rejected the ideas of profit, market, and capital. The east views capitalism as the enemy and promised its destruction.

In contrast with that, the Western nations chose the path of protecting the basis of capitalism, although some added socialist reforms. As a result, they had to make every effort to preserve the international mechanism of the free market economy. Their efforts naturally include defense and security. Mechanisms like the incarnation of capitalism known as the "borderless economy" exist in the first place because of the international framework built and protected as a result of vivid ideological struggles and security efforts.

Although the struggle between East and West has eased recently, the Soviet Union has yet to abandon communism.

Omae presents the "borderless economy" like water which falls naturally in the air. That could be understood if it were an argument with just pure economics as the subject, and not involving politics and ideology, which are the bases of the "borderless economy." However, this is unrealistic.

First of all, Omae appears to view how Japan should approach the world from an economic perspective. He has stated many times that economics is at the heart of practical activity worldwide. However, considering international relations only from economic theory is dangerous. This is because, although it may be natural, the real world does not act just on economic principles, which take profit, efficiency, and market share as their ultimate objectives.

For the ordinary country in modern international society, except for those countries which are especially impoverished, economics is strictly a means of activity and is not an objective. "How an economy that is functioning well is used in an integrated fashion" is a more basic and high level proposition than "how an economy can be made to function well."

Economic prosperity is a self-evident premise for a country and for the world. The objective after that premise has been fulfilled is the problem. The factors which determine that objective are politics, ideology, ethics, religion, and philosophy, things of value besides economics.

Consequently, countries often adopt behaviors that run counter to economic theory in order to achieve such objectives. The strengthening of military force in the United States and the Soviet Union is a model of that. Japan's prohibition on weapons exports is contrary to economic efficiency. International embargoes against South Africa and Vietnam cannot be explained by economic theory. Human beings and nations generally undertake foolish actions economically for the sake of noble causes and ideals.

A Convenient Phrase for Large Corporations

Then there was the case of purchases of Iranian crude oil by large Japanese corporations at the end of 1979.

The United States, whose diplomatic personnel had been taken as hostages by Iran, took the bold step of a total

embargo against Iran, including oil which it had purchased from Iran up to then, in order to apply pressure on that country. As a result, the oil that Iran had planned to export to the United States floated about. Japanese firms bought that oil in large volumes and at a high price on the European spot market.

This was not an especially illegal action. Judged by the "borderless economy" theory of the Omae school, it was a completely justifiable commercial activity. However, the United States was violently angry and considered it to be an act of betrayal by an ally. It hindered the efforts to apply economic pressure on Iran and have the hostages released as a consequence. Secretary of State Vance, who was known as a gentle person, changed his countenance and rebuked Japan's behavior as "insensitive." This became a major incident during which many voices rose in the United States to castigate Japan, and the Japan-U.S. relationship suddenly deteriorated.

In both international relations and Japan-U.S. relations, noneconomic factors like this carry a great weight. In an ordinary nation, politics first determines the way the nation should be and the direction in which it will move forward. Economics is the base to support that. A country that overturns this preference for politics over economics will not be able to avoid friction with other countries.

In the second place, the "borderless economy" theory overly ignores or treats lightly the plain facts.

The people who believe in "borderless economy," and not just Omae, expound well the idea that the dynamism of economics itself to move across borders is more powerful and important than the will of individual nations.

However, the facts that a sovereign nation has an independent will and authority, and that borders presently exist are indisputable. The power of multinational corporations is awesome to be sure, and the prestige of Japanese money is astonishing. However, the framework in which such products, capital, and people span over a number of nations is the decision of the liberalization policies of the countries involved. This is because each of these countries had the will to open their borders to the firms, capital, and products of designated foreign countries.

As a result, the "borderless economy" will not be able to evade the sovereign actions of the nations concerned. No matter how furiously international capital moves, its coordinate axis is always adjusted by the will of an international level group such as G-7. Things that ought to occur from economic logic like semiconductor retaliatory measures and invocation of Super 301 will simply occur in accordance with the will of a nation like the United States.

If we take a look at Europe, we can see that many national borders are closed to "cheap and good Japanese products." This is the invocation of state sovereignty to protect domestic industries. In the first half of the 1980's, a symbolic illustration of the invocation of this type of sovereignty occurred. France, at that time, would only allow the entry of Japanese-made VTR's at the remote town of Poitiers. Sovereignty can be awesome.

In the Japanese market as well, a number of fields can be found that do not fit the "borderless economy." Rice heads the list. This is the same even with the introduction of labor from the outside. In the financial market, the United States is excluded to a great extent. This occurs even though Japanese money has poured into the United States like a flood. U.S. monetary authorities have now thrust before Japan a 5-item demand to open up the financial market.

Judging from the true state of affairs in Japan, we find that "borderless economy" seems to mean only situations in which Japanese products and capital simply flow abroad. I have doubts as to whether the flow into Japan is similarly "borderless." That being the case, the expression "borderless economy" itself sounds like a convenient catch phrase for large Japanese corporations to sortie to foreign countries.

Omae's Pompous Assertion

I have gazed at Kenichi Omae's article, "Let's Deal with 'Japan-bashing,'" which was published in the January 1990 issue of this journal. The opening paragraph of this article contains a brave line, which concludes that neither Chalmers Johnson nor K. Van Wolferen, who take Japanese studies as their life work, "could truly make a knowledgeable statement about things Japanese."

With regard to the COCOM [Coordinating Committee on Export Controls] violation by Toshiba Machine, the consultations among Japanese firms concerning the construction at the U.S. military base at Yokosuka, and the purchase of Rockefeller Center by Mitsubishi Estate Co., Omae states that Japan should assert to the United States that none of these was wrong. He expresses resentment, however, that there was no one but himself on the Japanese side to fling accurate assertions at the U.S. side.

What amazed me within Omae's assertions was the spot where he says that it was strange that Japan's Fair Trade Commission rendered a "guilty" verdict with regard to the Yokusuka Base consultations. He says that the Fair Trade Commission should not have handed down a verdict so quickly, and that the construction firms should fight with the U.S. side by declaring that "the verdict was wrong."

I assume Omae is saying that the firms taking part in this consultation incident are all innocent. I also suppose that he says that the verdict of the Fair Trade Commission was wrong.

When this sort of incident occurs, the Fair Trade Commission is obliged by law to begin an investigation and take appropriate measures. Omae is insisting that Japan

exclaim to the United States that in the cases that produced an outcome of guilty on the basis of domestic statute, the defendants were innocent. Even if there is some doubt about the Fair Trade Commission's guilty verdict, what is the basis for him to conclude that they are innocent?

Omae asserts with regard to Toshiba Machine's export of milling machines to the Soviet Union, which was a COCOM violation, that Japan should say quickly that this was "wrong." However, in this case, a definitive conclusion was reached by a criminal investigation in Japan that this was a COCOM violation by means of false declarations. Whether the performance of Soviet submarines was improved by these milling machines is a separate question. He says that we should shout to the United States that this COCOM violation, which produced a clear verdict of guilty in the Japanese court of law, was "wrong."

Indeed, according to Omae, wartime propaganda which calls "guilty" innocent [or "black" white] may be needed because the fourth world war has broken out between Japan and the United States in accordance with current intelligence. What has risen to the surface, however, from this series of assertions by Omae is a pattern by which he attempts to automatically and completely defend the activities of Japanese businessmen towards the United States or the world no matter what sort of criticism the other side makes.

With regard to the purchase of Rockefeller Center, he introduces the fact that it was looked upon favorably overall in a commentary contributed to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. Its contents contain economic logic from beginning to end, such as "there is a buyer because there is a seller."

Therefore, Omae emphasizes that the Japanese who accurately state or have stated to the U.S. side such "rebuttals" in present-day Japan are not "outside themselves." To be sure, persons who thoroughly assert the theory of defending Japanese businessmen across-the-board by saying that corporate behavior is always right up to the point of concluding that "guilty" is really innocent are nothing less than that. He has specifically written the following.

"The problem is that persons known as negotiators, the journalistic camp, and intellectuals, as well as the Government of Japan, cannot make even one rebuttal to this situation "the increasing criticism of Japan."

"U.S. journalism has developed the argument that if opinion A appears, then opinion B is sure to appear. However, there are not many people in Japan who can tell what opinion B is."

The meaning of the latter remark is a bit unclear, but after that, he has said in detail how he would frequently appear and make statements to the U.S. media. It is clear that he is asserting that he is the only Japanese who can accurately rebut the United States. That is quite a pompous assertion. That is also a mistake.

As for writing boldly in order to publicize the facts, there are many people even among Japanese journalists, whom Omae concludes are "lazy and forget the starting point," who have accurately described Japan's viewpoint and assertions to the U.S. side in public forums. For example, Yoshio Murakami, who was the U.S. bureau chief for ASAHI SHIMBUN, expressed countless times Japan's assertions, from his own viewpoint, on the Japan-U.S. relationship. He did this both on television and at large symposiums covering the entire United States. Moreover, his discourse was eloquent with a lucid argument and in English several times more polished that Omae's.

I have a good recollection of Yoichiro Ichioka, who was the Washington bureau chief of NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN, appearing on television and responding patiently over a long period of time to criticisms of Japan poured on by an American audience. The names of five or six Japanese journalists who contribute to U.S. newspapers come to mind immediately as well.

Foreign Ministry officials whom Omae criticizes as lacking the ability to gather and analyze information, have recently begun to make effective protests and assertions to the U.S. mass media, albeit "government-manufactured."

However, neither the reporters nor the diplomats publicize themselves like Omae when they refute the U.S. charges.

Omae, as a means of rebuttal, always likes to refer to European examples when Japan's closed character is attacked. If it is said that "Americans cannot buy Japanese companies," he replied that "it is even more difficult to buy Swiss companies." Hence, Japan's closed character can be countered with Europe's closed character.

However, this, after all, is debating by talking back. Without touching upon an essential subject like Japan's closed character, he evades it by raising worse cases about some other country. This is like a driver who, when arrested for a speeding violation, points to another car that has passed his car at a high speed and complains to the police officer that "that driver is worse." Omae claims that "this is accepted by Americans," but in my experience, I find that many Americans, on the contrary, would come back with the argument that "two 'wrongs' do not make a 'right.'"

In fact, if I can report frankly, a considerable number of my American acquaintances have begun to feel more angered by Japan's attitude after seeing Omae's performance on television and at seminars. Why do they feel such a repulsion? To hear them tell it, many point to his manner and the style of his dialogue in addition to the contents of his assertions. They stopped short of making specific remarks about him because they would appear to be personal attacks.

However, immediately after a televised debate in June of last year with T. Boone Pickens, which Omae has referred to as his "success," I interviewed Pickens. Pickens did not remember Omae's name, and taking the attitude that there really was no problem, laughed and said, "He said something or other about my stock purchase of Koite Manufacturing being illegal, so I became cool and asked him upon cross-examination if he was calling me a greenmailer (someone who corners the market on a stock for unfair profit or objectives)." Since I did not see this debate, I cannot say positively, but I felt that, somehow, there was a considerable gap between the effect of the rebuttal to the U.S. side that Omae conveys to the Japanese public and the actual interpretation of the U.S. side.

Karatsu's "Unique" Theory

Finally, I would like to discuss a series of assertions of Hajime Karatsu about Japan-U.S. friction. Karatsu first became widely known when he set forth the case that "Japan did nothing wrong" in the Toshiba Machine COCOM violation incident and developed the unique theory on Japan-U.S. semiconductor friction that "because the Japan-U.S. semiconductor agreement is odd in the first place, it is unfair for the United States to blame Japan even if Japan violated that agreement."

My view of the COCOM violations has already been described. As for semiconductors, I think that the behavior of a sovereign nation is at its lowest if it does not observe an agreement that it signed and promised to keep, and when it is pointed out by the other side that a violation has been committed, assumes the defiant attitude that it would be all right even if there were a violation because the contents of that agreement were odd.

The greatest feature of Karatsu's argument lies in the point that he states positively that the Japan-U.S. friction, and U.S. criticism of Japan in particular, is solely due to Japan's superior technology. He says that "the real cause of the imbalance that is seen along with the abnormality of Japan-U.S. trade is the technology gap." What he is stating pure and simple is that the basic cause of the friction at all is because Japanese products are superior to U.S. products.

Therefore, he emphasizes how superior the technology of Japan's manufacturing companies is by stating that they are "first in the world in machine tools, first in the world in metal molds, and first in the world in both steel plates and plastics." He explains that the reason behind this is the independence of the Japanese people. He repeats his argument that Europe and the United States are inferior and Japan is superior in a way that surprises European and U.S. technicians with such statements as: "The Japanese are geniuses when it comes to applications development, which is the essence of technology. This is because they have a uniquely Japanese view of things and have not adopted the concepts of Europe and the United States," and "The way that technology is interpreted by Japan is different from Europe and the United States. Technology in Europe and the United States originally came from the salons of the nobility."

With regard to criticism of Japan over the closed nature of its market and the lack of competitive principles, Karatsu lashes back that this is all a misunderstanding. He boldly states, "Calling (the Japanese market) closed is way off the mark," "Challenging this is just jealousy," and "The U.S. side's argument of Japan being special is the silly talk of men of leisure." He insists that because the Japanese market is completely open and free competition is guaranteed to the point that "both farm produce and industrial products are being purchased from the United States in adequate amounts," U.S. criticism is nothing more than a feeble complaint.

However, in actuality, to argue that the wide-ranging friction between Japan and the United States, which extends to politics, security, and culture, is just over technology is like looking at the ceiling from the bottom of a ditch [in other words, having a limited view of things]. Since Karatsu has no concern at all for the Japan-U.S. relationship or East-West security, he disposes of COCOM as simply "the concept of an insular nation like the United States" and treats it as having no connection with Japan. This is to say that he is not worried about the flow of powerful military high technology to the Soviet Union, which is a military superpower which until late has viewed the West as an enemy. His assertion in the Toshiba Machine case clearly endorses that.

As I have written already, if economics is a means to an end for human beings, technology is like a tool. To explain away Japan-U.S. friction by saying that technology is inorganic is akin to operating the Japan-U.S. relationship by robots. To launch a theory about the excellence of the Japanese people based on the high level of the technology of their manufactured goods can be considered to be warped ultranationalism. A statement like it being "a good course of action for Japan to keep a solid grasp on industrial products with high added value while those with little added value are to be made overseas" would be economic imperialism overseas or something similar.

No matter how excellent Japan's technology is considered, the important discoveries, such as the transistor and semiconductor integrated circuits, which were its [Japanese technology's] source, were all made by the United States. The fact that the members of the Japanese firms that produced this excellent technology work extraordinarily longer hours than their counterparts in the other advanced nations and that their standard of living does not reflect the benefits that high technology is expected to bring is hardly mentioned at all by Karatsu.

Although he explains that, under free competition, it is self-evident that foreign products with excellent high technology will drive out domestic products with lesser

quality, how would it be if we applied that same principle to the Japanese market in the 1960's and 1970's? The truth that the present "victory of technology" for Japan has produced a backlash from many foreign countries, who call Japan a "predatory exporter" and "the new monster," cannot be resolved by just a theory of technology. Karatsu who, as a spokesman for Japan's manufacturing businesses, seems to support their activities overseas unconditionally, knows well that the position of those who have been defeated and wounded by Japan does not cause this problem. However, the situation is grave when we revere the interests of Japanese manufacturing companies and put them ahead of the interests of Japan as a whole.

The Argument of Overemphasizing Technology

Karatsu rejects out of hand the U.S. criticisms of "the closed nature of the Japanese market" and "restrictions on free competition" because he does not understand the real situation. Without recognizing the views of others and different theories, he cuts down the other side with rude language before entering into a discussion, like, "Many people in Washington only know numbers, so they raise objections about Japan willy-nilly." Japanese intellectuals who accept to a certain degree the closed nature and special nature of the Japanese market are dismissed as "just blindly following the United States." However, is the principle of open and free competition really working as well in the Japanese market as Karatsu claims?

According to Nissho-Iwai Co. President Masaru Hayami, "The unmistakable fact that the Japanese market has not opened because of all sorts of restrictions is clearly displayed in the results of an investigation into domestic and foreign price differences."

According to Yaohan Department Store Chairman Kazuo Wada, "With items such as beverages like cola and food, why are they so cheap in the United States, and so expensive in Japan? The conclusion is because the principle of competition does not work in Japan. If we never thought about arranging to buy the cheapest products from anywhere in the world, our business could not compete. However, our business competes even though the country of Japan does not give this consideration. This type of country cannot be found anywhere else in the world."

Both of these statements are current ones from major Japanese firms that are tops in their fields. Would Karatsu criticize such language as "blindly following the United States."

What I have discussed above is that I believe that Shintaro Ishihara's theory of Japan-U.S. relations overemphasizes national glory; that of Kenichi Omae overemphasizes economics; and the assertions of Hajime Karatsu overemphasize technology. I think that the arguments of Omae and Karatsu overemphasize the activities of Japanese big business. Put another way, the arguments of Omae and Karatsu are theories about the Japan-U.S. relationship that overemphasize Japanese big business.

With regard to the Japan-U.S. relationship which is the most important among foreign relations whether Japan likes it or not, I strongly feel that we should do away with short-circuited neonationalism that is easy for the masses to understand, and adopt right now a comprehensive and solid approach without bias.